Addressing CAP feedback

Customer Advisory Panel – Meeting 8/2023

Table 1: Customer service incentive scheme (CSIS) proposed measures for 2026-2031

What we heard	What we propose to do
• Question raised as to what the business considers a good CSIS measure. Business suggested a good CSIS measures should be relevant, verifiable, measurable, and provide evidence that customers value the service improvement	The AER's CSIS guideline describes principles for good CSIS measures. These principles are in line with those mentioned during the CAP meeting. We will make sure that our measures will meet those principles
• There is opportunity to introduce CSIS measures during the next regulatory reset period that support the new customer energy resource (CER) strategy	We will investigate whether it is possible to add new CSIS measures during the regulatory period. The difficulty may be that we may not have enough baseline data available to base targets on
• Question raised as to how penalties and rewards are constructed and whether there should be different structures for each network	We will take this in consideration when we start developing targets for the CSIS measures
• Given new technologies, and changing customer preferences, it is important to consider communication methods other than contact centre interactions i.e., SMS, website, AI	We will consider this when refining our CSIS measures
• Question raised as to whether the networks collect data on outage restoration times that could be of value to customers	We will start collecting data on outage restoration times as soon as possible. To be able to do this, there is a need to change our systems and processes. Therefore, we may not have enough data available to develop a baseline for our CSIS measure
• Recommendation made to consider including a widespread and long duration outage (WALDO) CSIS measures to reflect the priority afforded to network resilience, and to explore whether there are existing measures that might support this	Given the variability in resilience events, a CSIS measure may not be the best solution. Instead, we are focusing on more targeted investments to address network resilience
• Question raised as to whether there is any opportunity for the business to have a dedicated customer service line for First Nation's customers	This is a good idea, we will explore this
• Overall, the CAP were supportive of the business's CSIS measures however, would value further investigation on outage restoration times and consideration as to whether metrics could include all types of communication.	As mentioned before, we will further investigate whether we can include this in the CSIS

Table 2: Supporting customers in vulnerable circumstances in 2026-2031

What we heard	What we propose to do
• Recommendation to provide more narrative to highlight how vulnerability differs between the networks	This is a good suggestion. We will take this into account going forward
• Recommendation to build out the demographics of the customer base for each network	This builds upon the previous comment. It is a good idea for us to further explore how our networks' customer base might differ from Australia-wide statistics on number of customers who may experience vulnerable circumstances. This can be different for each of the networks.
• Recommendation to 'lift up' the narrative around value stacking. Each network will have different partnerships and opportunities i.e., working with councils on tree clearance	We will refine the identified initiatives and will make them more specific, so that differences in initiatives between the networks will be clarified
• There is opportunity to educate customers on how they can optimise their customer energy resources to benefit the networks	Agree, education on customer energy resources network optimisation will become increasingly important as the number of customer energy resources increases
• There is more work that could be done to better understand vulnerable customers. It is difficult to determine how many people are impacted by vulnerability just by looking at ECA statistics	We will further refine ECA statistics, so that they are more targeted to our networks
• Regional and rural areas are more exposed to vulnerability however, this is not always reflected in the proposed solutions. Recommendation to consider working with local health authorities in regional and rural areas to understand how customers are impacted	This is a good point. Preferences for initiatives will differ across different communities. Therefore, it is important to partner with communities, so that we can tailor initiatives to the needs of the community
• Recommendation to include more detail around how developed the networks' partnerships are, and who and how the networks work with communities and organisations	Going forward, we will work on making the identified initiatives more specific. This includes more details around partnerships
• Understanding the pathways for vulnerable customers to participate in the energy transition would be helpful, especially those affected by affordability	This is a good point. We will provide education campaigns, to better inform our customers on opportunities to participate in the energy transition
• The business's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) is a resource that should be used to engage First Nation's communities, and to ensure that the business is meeting	Agree

its customer vulnerability targets in line with the aspirations of First Nation's communities.

Table 3: Distribution system operator (DSO) business cases

What we heard	What we propose to do
• Recommendation to consider whether there is scope for co-investment or shared platforms or initiatives with other distributors where customers may have the same needs	Noted.
• More visuals would be beneficial to help 'lift up' the narrative. It is important to present the outcomes for customers rather than the technology being deployed	We will develop a visual and present to the CAP how the DSO investments fit into the broader CER integration strategy (i.e., how do flexible exports, non-network procurement come together with tariffs, CER related augex, and customer education). We will also continue to work on clearly articulating the customer outcomes of the investment.
• It would be helpful to know what the median reward provided under the Summer Saver program would be, in addition to the total reward	Average reward was $171, median was $140, and mode was $70.
• Question raised as to how the Summer Saver program today represents best value for customers, or could it be of greater value if other providers were involved.	Summer Saver Program is the non-network alternative to network augmentation. NPV analysis is conducted each year to determine to the AER that it is the more cost-effective solution. Customers who are recruited into the program are compensated for their involvement. UE tests the market each year for the opportunity to partner with third parties.
• The CAP agreed that customer experience benefits should be included in the benefits case.	We will explore a way to approach quantifying the customer experience benefits within our DSO proposal and present back to the CAP.